AN

AFFECTING HISTORY

OF AN

Inn-Keeper

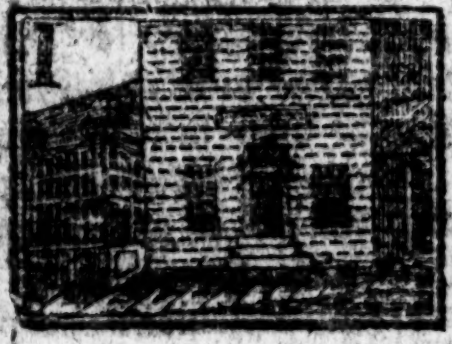
IN

NORMANDY:

TOGETHER WITH

A TRAGICAL STORY,

On the unhappy Conſequences of an immoderate attachment to Riches.



LONDON:
Printed for general Inſtruction.

THE

HISTORY

OF AN

INN-KEEPER,

NORMANDY.

WHEN a man narrowly ſcrutinizes into his own heart how little ſatisfaction ariſes from ſuch an inſpection! His goodneſs many times extends no further than to languid and impotent reſolutions; whence he hath the mortification to ſee that his virtue is daily periſhing in it's bloſſoms; while vice deeply roots itſelf in the corruption of his nature, derives additional ſtrength from the luxuriance of the ſoil, and is hourly making bold advances to maturity. At the ſame time that prepoſſeſſions and prejudices enthral his mind, they likewiſe enervate the

powers of exertion, and thereby preclude to the captive all prospect of enlargement. Passions are clamorous, temptations are numerous, and reason too frequently is of insufficient force to silence the former, and to repel the latter. Thus his breast resembles a chaos, where discord darkness, and confusion maintain their empire, and triumph over the boasted authority of man. Disappointed and displeased with the picture, which his own bosom exhibits of himself, he is naturally led to enquire into the cause of this involuntary deformity. Some writers have endeavoured to solve all difficulties by affirming that the creation of such a strange compound as man, was necessary, to preserve a due scale and gradation of Beings. Others ascribe all our errors and defects to the fall, and thereby imputs to the first parents of mankind, the moral evil discoverable, in the species. But without entering upon a discussion of these subjects, I would observe that the human mind in its present state wears the appearance of an ancient superb structure which had formerly been injured, and defaced by hostile fury. There still remain strong marks of it's primitive grandeur although several of its noblest apartments, are so miserably maimed and neglected, that they are now become as it were, *an heritage for the dragons of the wilderness.*

It is a common observation that neither the best of men are exempt from faults and

follies, nor the worſt altogether deſtitute of worth and virtue. But ſometimes there is ſuch a mixture of good and bad qualities, ſo great a contrariety both of ſentiment and conduct in the ſame individual; that when we ourſelves ſit upon the trial of ſuch a character, we are even conſtrained to ſuſpend our ſentence; and our judgement is not only embarraſſed by the interſperſion of ſlighter crimes; but it is alſo frequently perplexed and obſtructed in its deciſions when actions of the blackeſt turpitude have been perpetrated by men, whoſe general behaviour hath correſponded with the ſtricteſt rules of virtue and benevolence. Hiſtory, ſacred and profane furniſhes us with ſtriking inſtances of the brighteſt excellences, and the foulеſt blemiſhes, concentered in the ſame perſon. Oftentimes that predominant paſſion, which conſtitutes the very heroiſm or goodneſs ſhall aggravate every feature of vice if once it be inliſted under the banner of wickedneſs. That natural warmth of St Peter's temper, which rendered his zeal for his injured maſter ſo conſpicuous, betrayed him into the moſt horrid oaths and execrations. But there is no neceſſity of a recourſe to ſuch diſtant examples, we ſhall find ſufficient ſcope for reflection upon topics of this nature, amidſt the occurences of our own times. Nor will the ſubſequent ſtory be bad commient upon

the hints already advanced; or too faint an illustration of the deplorable consequences, which now and then follow upon an unlimited indulgence even of the best of human passions.

An innkeeper at a town in Normandy had eight children. His wife, whom he loved with the utmost tenderness, died of a fever after fourteen years cohabitation. He was inconsolable for a while; but at length he emerged from his grief, and transferred all his affection to the fruits of his marriage-bed. The income arising from the profits of his business, was an incompetent maintenance for his family. Hence several of his sons and daughters, when they had attained to a proper age, quitted their father's house, and entered into servitude. So strong was the innholder's attachment to his children, that he regarded their departure in the light of a temporary banishment. However, there yet remained at home his eldest and his youngest son, who practised every filial duty to supply the deficiency of his absent comforts. Prior to this period commenced the last war between France and Great Britain: In the progress whereof the French compelled into the service a multitude of young fellows, who were averse to the profession of arms. It unhappily fell out, that the innkeeper's youngest boy, a lad about sixteen years of age, was seized upon by a recruit-

ing party and hurried into Flanders. The diſtreſs of the poor father at this melancholy incident, would probably have been inſupportable if his brother, who was the miniſter of the parish, had not uſed every argument which reaſon and religion ſuggeſted, to alleviate the pangs of the bereaved parent. But although a courſe of time had aſſuaged the ſeverity of his ſufferings, yet his ſorrows were occaſionally quickened by the pitcous tales the youth tranſmitted to him of the many hardſhips he underwent abroad; by repeated applications of this neceſſitous ſon for money; and by the inability of the father to gratify the preſſing requeſts of a ſtarving child.

After ſome years were elapſed, there rode an officer into the yard of the inn; who alighting from his horſe, called aloud for the landlord. The maſter of the houſe obſerving, that his gueſt by his apparel was a man of rank, approached him with deference. At which time the officer fixing his eyes ſtedfaſtly upon his hoſt, acquainted him, that he was juſt then arrrived from Tournay and had been deſired to inform him of his ſon's health. The landlord's fond heart bounded at the mention of a perſon ſo exceedingly dear to him, and he was urgent with the gentleman to perpetuate his converſation upon this engaging theme. But the ſoldier replied, that he was neceſ-

ſituated to pay a few viſits in the town, and would take a more favourable opportunity to ſatisfy every enquiry of his hoſt.

About ten o'clock at night the gentleman returned to his inn, and told the landlord that he had invited ſeveral friends to dine the next day. Whereforre he directed a plentiful and elegant entertainment to be provided. At this protracted ſtay of his gueſt the innholder ſecretly rejoiced, hoping thereby to hear many particulars about his boy in the Netherlands. The officer complaining of fatigue, and deſiring to be conducted to his bedchamber, the man of the houſe catched up a candle and lighted him to his apartment. No ſooner were they both entered, but the gentleman drew a purſe of gold from his pocket, and gave it to the landlord, with a charge to take care of ſo valuable a depoſit. Then wiſhing him a good night, and reminding him of the morrow's engagements, he ſhut the door, and haſtened into bed.

The following day, the Abbe called upon his brother, and with great complacency in his countenance, enquired after the officer's health. The inn-keeper told him, that the Officer was well, and had ſet out early in the morning on his return to the army. It is impoſſible, rejoined the Abbe with a ſmile. That very Officer will moſt aſſuredly dine with you to day, and give you ſuch a hiſtory

of your son, as must be productive to you of a degree of joy, very little inferior to rapture. The landlord was astonished at these mysterious words, and asked his brother, if he was formerly acquainted with the gentleman. To which the minister made answer in the affirmative. Who is he? said the innkeeper with great emotion. The whole secret returned the Abbe, shall be revealed to you at dinner. Hereupon the innholder appeared extremely agitated, and peremptorily asserted the departure of his guest at break of day. Indeed it cannot be so, replied the Priest. There is a happiness in reserve for you, my dear brother, which my heart struggles to disclose. But the obligations I am under of secrecy, will not permit me to unfold this interesting riddle.

The master of the inn, whose face abundantly bespoke the perturbation of his breast, stared upon the minister with a peculiar wildness in his eyes, and seemed entirely deprived of all power of utterance. Ah! my brother, cried the Abbe, this is too, too much. I cannot any longer keep you in this painful state of suspence. I beseech you to recollect the features of the military gentleman. Pray tell me, if you cannot trace out the lineaments of your darling son, under the badge of distinguished merit. This eclaircissement had nearly proved fatal to the landlord, who turned very pale, trembled

in every joint, and immediately funk down in a ſwoon. The aged churchman blamed himſelf for the temerity of his proceedings, and wiſhed a thouſand times, that he had ſuppreſſed this affecting part of his narrative. But ſince he could not retract his ſtory, he cheriſhed hopes that a fuller explanation of every circumſtance might deliver his brother's mind from this diſtraction of contending paſſions. Wherefore when the unhappy man was recovered from his fits, the miniſter tenderly intreated him to compoſe the turbulency of his thoughts; and further informed him, that his ſon, by a late ſignal diſplay of valour, had been rewarded with an hundred louis d'ores and a lieutenancy. That the dear youth, noticing the officious aſſiduity of his father, preſently inferred from thence his parent's ignorance of him; now diſguiſed, as it were, by his improved ſtature, and the ſuperiority of his attire. That pleaſed with this uncommon adventure, he had apprized his friends thereof, and appointed them to dine with him, that they might ſhare the joys of the family upon his diſcovery of himſelf. To all which the Abbe injoined, that his worthy and amiable child, had brought his indigent father a purſe of money to obviate his preſent neceſſities, and to prevent future anxieties.

Scarce had the uncle mentioned this ſuperlative inſtance of filial goodneſs, before the

innkeeper dropped to the ground, writhed with frightful convulsions, while the ecclesiastic looked with inconceivable surprise upon the servants, who stood speechless round their seemingly dying master. Amidst these scenes of confusion, the maid recollected, that there was a vial of hartshorn drops in a closet pertaining to the bedchamber, where the officer had lain the preceeding night. As she was running up stairs for the medicine, she was pursued by the minister, who endeavoured to arrest her in her flight, that he might learn from her, if it was possible, the true cause of these strange and formidable occurrences.

With thoughts more disturbed and embroiled than the stormy deep he entered the chamber, where, finding that his strength and spirits were hastily departing from him, he threw himself upon a couch, which was accidentally at hand. After he had continued a few minutes in this fainting state, he opned his eyes, and thought that he saw something like an human form lying under the bed. The figure powerfully attracted his sight for a while. But when the Abbe had gazed long enough to ascertain the reality of the object, he started up from his recumbent posture, and collecting all his shattered powers into one effort eagerly dragged the body from its concealment. To his inexpressible consternation, horror,

and anguish, the mangled corps proved to be the remains of the military stranger. The pious clergyman, penetrated through his very soul at this shocking spectacle fetched a deep groan, and instantly fell dead upon his murdered nephew.

By this time the innholder was restored from those dreadful convulsions, which had threatned his immediate dissolution. Raising himself out of the chair in which his domesticks had seated him, he desired to be taken before a magistrate, to whom he confessed every particular of this bloody tragedy. It seemed that the eldest son was the first who proposed the destruction of the officer. The father heard the overture with detestation; but the young man having bound himself in a joint bond with his father for the payment of a large sum of money, and hourly expecting his parent and himself to be thrown into a jail, urged the necessity of making the soldier's purse their own property, as the only expedient to secure themselves from the miseries of confinement. The father warmly remonstrated against the pursuit of such impious measures; and likewise observed, that the guilt thereof would be highly inflamed by the extraordinary confidence which his guest had reposed in him. The son intimated that he thought it cruel usage to be made subject to the penalties of a bond, for which he had received

no pecuniary conſideration, and which he had entered into upon no other motive than the preſervation of his father from the reſentments of his creditors. The parent bewailed their complicated misfortunes; but perſiſted in ſuffering the utmoſt extremities, rather than embrue his hands in blood. When the young fellow noticed, that his arguments made no impreſſion, he then artfully enumerated the ſore afflictions which his youngeſt brother endured in Flanders from cold, penury, and toil. Nor did he fail to inſinuate, that now an occaſion preſented itſelf of ſuccouring the wretched youth, who was daily ſurrounded with famine, diſeaſe, and death. The pitiable father burſt into a torrent of tears, and haſtily ſaid, Whatever we are to do, let us do it immediately.

Thus the lacerated heart, though it had reſolutely maintained its ground againſt the piercing ſolicitations of poverty, the approaching terrors of a priſon, and the importunate clamours of an undone child, nevertheleſs fell a ſudden ſacrifice to the inordinate tranſports of parental affection.

A TRAGICAL STORY.

ON THE

Unhappy Conſequences

OF AN

IMMODERATE ATTACHMENT

TO RICHES.

RICHES, when poſſeſſed by the benevolent man, are perhaps, one of the greateſt of human bleſſings. To ſupply the wants of the forlorn widow and fatherleſs, and theſe, who from affluence, by ſome unforſeen misfortune, are reduced to miſery and want, are actions that even angels would delight to perform; and of ſuch infinite importance are they to the perſons who practiſe them, that we are aſſured from the very beſt authority, they will, in a particular manner, be taken notice of, in that tremendous day of accounts, by HIM "who is then to wind up the grand œconomy of nature, and open the ſolemn ſcene."

The money, however, is the efficient cauſe of an innumerable train of human miſeries,

is a truth that need only be named. What but the introduction of luxury, the inſeparable concomitant of riches, by the great Cyrus himſelf, rendered his hardy followers effeminate, and in the ſequel proved the ſubverſion of his extenſive empire? Greece, the mother of heroes, while directed by the inſtitutes of the immortal Solon and Lycurgus, was always invincible; but no ſooner were they laid aſide, and an inſatiable thirſt for the Perſian gold engroſſed the minds of her leaders, than her aſpiring ſtruggles for liberty became languid, and ſhe fell an eaſy prey to the conqueror. Rome, the once miſtreſs of the world, likewiſe in her turn, after extending her conqueſts to the "gorgeous eaſt", introduced into her common wealth the baneful effects of riches, which, in like manner, proved fatal to her. Happy were theſe republics when an Ariſtides and a Fabricius were among their public directors.

Since powerful empires and ſtates have thus fallen victims to the direful effects of riches it naturally follows that private individuals muſt alſo have had their ſhare of misfortunes from the like cauſe. I ſhall not, however, trouble the readers with any more common-place hints from the hiſtoric page, but ſhall preſent you with a ſtory which, happened in private life, in which, in a ſtriking manner, is exhibited the fatal effects of an immoderate attachment to this root of all evil.

ROSARA was the only daughter of a gentleman in the north country, poſſeſſed of ſeveral hundreds per annum. She had, in an eminent degree, a moſt beatiful "ſet of features," attended with thoſe nameleſs graces of perſon wich inſenſibility attract the attention of the moſt ſuperficial obſerver; to which was added the greateſt good-nature; an uncommon affability; an humane and feeling heart, and an accompliſhed underſtanding. In ſhort, to ſum up her character in a few words, ſhe was in fact, what the daughter of Cato was in deſcription poſſeſt.

Of *inward* greatness *unaffected* wisdom,
And *sanctity* of manners. ADDISON.

It is, however, neceſſary to obſerve that ſhe was unlucky in a father. He was a man in whoſe breaſt avarice had gained conſiderable ground, and whoſe heart, was in a great meaſure callous to the tender feelings of a paternal affection: as it is reported of him, that he would often, when ſpeaking on the ſubject of marriage, ridicule that famous ſaying of Themiſtocles, namely, "that he would much rather marry his daughter to a man of merit, though poor, than to one who was rich without it," by obſerving, that if he had his daughter married to a man of fortune, he did not care whether he had merit or not

Among the many who paid their addreſſes to this very accompliſhed young lady, was PHILANDER, a gentleman who to an agreeable appearance, added the more engaging qualifications of the mind. He, though perhaps inferior to point of fortune to almoſt every one of her admirers, gained her intire affection, and they agreed by mutual promiſes, to be one another's for life.

A father frequently is not the firſt perſon who is acquainted with ſuch attachments in his family. This was alſo the caſe with Roſara's; her other relations were the perſons who firſt gave him this piece of information, endeavouring at the ſame time, as much as poſſible, to exaggerate every circumſtance to the prejudice of Philander, and inſiſting in the moſt earneſt manner, upon his doing every thing in his power to put a ſtop to their further connections. This piece of intelligence ſtartled him greatly; and when we conſider his own diſpoſition, as noticed above, it is no hard matter to conceive how much he was irritated in conſequence of it.

ROSARA was informed of what had happened between her father and friends, before her next interview with Philander. She accordingly, with an aching heart, told him the circumſtance, adding, that ſhe underſtood her father was in a terrible rage, and was determined to ſtop any further connec-

tion between them, but that he had not yet mentioned it to her though she ever day expected it. "It shall not however (continued she) be in the power of any o my friends to cause me marry any person but such as I chuse myself, neither shall all their united efforts constrain me to love you less than I do at present." Philander conjured her to abide by these resolutions, and departed.

A very few days after as Rosara was one evening sitting alone in her room her father entered it, and having taken two or three turns, broke silence to the following purport:—"I had a considerable while since begun to suspect that there was more betwixt you and Philander than what I was well aware of but of this I am now credibly informed by some of your friends, who have your interest much at heart; and who tell me that to such a length are matters now carried, that you and he are determined, as soon as possible to be united in wedlock. This, however I forbid, on pain of incurring my highest resentment How much do you think such an union would degrade you? He is a person entirely beneath your station, and consequently unworthy of your smallest notice, when a matrimonial affair comes under consideration! Besides, I hope you will remember that Superbo is at your service; and, as he is a gentleman of station,

I expect you are to comply with his desires" —"My dear father (replied she trembling), I never did intend to marry Philander without giving you previous information; and since you have now mentioned such an affair, I ingenously confess that I love him above every other person; and my affection, by its long continuance, is too deeply rooted to be eradicated; besides, as I live in a land of liberty, you will surely not deny me the privilege of the irrationals, namely, the freedom of choice, as I am now arrived at a time of life capable of judging for myself: But, above all, I beg you will consider that I have engaged myself, by the strongest promises, to be his for life; and I have heard it said, "that a young man and woman who have come under free, voluntary, mutual promises, whether verbal or written, are actually married, even though they should never come together, and the defaulter, if ever married, lives in adultery. Surely you would not then be guilty of making me the perpetrator of such a detestable crime?"— Talk not (answered he with some warmth) of promises, or any such fantastic absurdities; I tell you nothing is in the smallest degree binding, till once the parties have joined hands before the parson: Promises! a pretty story truly! a parcel of chimerical notions you have got into your brain. Such fellows as Philander, who are possessed of a large

ſhare of rhetorical abilities, can very eaſily perſuade a raw unexperienced girl, intirely unacquainted with the world, ſuch as you are, to believe any thing."—"But, my dear father (replied ſhe, ready to ſink on the chair), it is really abſolutely impoſſible that I can enjoy the ſmalleſt happineſs in being united to any other perſon, even allowing there ſhould be as you ſay, no weight in promiſes; as no ſuch thing, you are very ſenſible, can actually exiſt, except the affection be reciprocal; and although Philander's fortune be but ſmall yet when added to mine, they will together make one ſo very conſiderable as will very well enable us to live comfortably, as neither of us I believe, has any ambition to live ſplendidly. I cannot, indeed, ſpeak from experience; but ſurely "the great ſecret of being happy in the married ſtate conſiſts not ſo much in being affluent as in loving each other well; in that caſe all things muſt conform themſelves to our deſires. This muſt produce a ſweetneſs which will abſorb all the vexations of life. In ſuch a ſituation the heart of the one is in that of the other; they think and act even in concert, and are often on the point of ſaying the ſame thing. No exiſtence is truly ſo precious as that of two married perſons who love each other, and I ſhould rather chuſe to loſe my life this day than—"

"Where in the name of wonder (ſays he,

interrupting her, and quite in a rage,) have you gleaned up all this romantic ſtuff? Not one word I ſay, more of that imaginary happineſs you talk of; it is wealth alone that conſtitutes what truly deſerves the name of happineſs; and when that is a-wanting, I would not give a pin for what you call reciprocal affection: Superbo's fortune together with your own, with place you in an independent ſtation, and therein conſiſts what in reality is happineſs! I am therefore determined to have you united to him with all poſſible diſpatch; ſo not one word more in oppoſition to the mandates of your father!" So ſaying he went out of the room in a paſſion, leaving the amiable Roſara in a ſtate of the utmoſt perplexity.

She would have at that time given the world to have ſeen Philander; but as he happened in conſequence of ſome material buſineſs, to be from home, that was impoſſible; beſides, it was intirely out of her power to ſend any perſon in the family to inform him of what had paſſed, provided he had been at home; ſo ſtrictly were her actions then obſerved.

In the mean time, ſo firmly did her father adhere to what he told her, that he diſpatched a meſſenger, who brought Superbo and a notary, who drew up in form the marriage-contract, without ever ſo much as conſulting the diſconſolate Roſara. The news

of this had just reached Philander's dwelling by the time of his return. He was shocked at the relation and was on the point of contriving some method of seeing Rosara (her father having previously found means to forbid him his house), in order to enquire if such a thing was done with her concurrence. This determination was, however, suppressed, by reflecting that her father was a man of consummate prudence, and who performed all his actions with the utmost deliberation, so that he naturally inferred this affair would be the result of her own coincidence. It was indeed, a matter of the utmost difficulty to bring himself to think, that Rosara would so suddenly alter her resolution; but when he reflected upon the effect of advice, paternal affection, the fickleness of the sex the disparity of his fortune when compared with Superbo's, he really imagined every thing was done with the consent of all parties. Such reflections as these confirmed his opinion, and he finally resolved not to see her again, as he naturally supposed such an interview could not fail to add to his present load of grief, and at the same time, give him an opportunity of upbraiding her with her breach of fidelity, a circumstance he did not then chuse to do.

The last rupture between Great Britain and France was then newly commenced, and Philander having had a previous incli-

nation to the army, an opportunity at that very time offered itself as some troops were just about to embark for America. He therefore, in order partly to wear off the remembrance of his dearest Rosara, who he then concluded was given up to another, and partly to gratify his own inclination, entered himself a volunteer in one of these corps. About two days after he embarked, leaving the settling and manegement of his affairs in the hand of a friend, who was to succeed to his estate, provided he should never return.

His departure being so very sudden, Rosara had not the smallest notice of it until he was gone, soon after which by his orders, she received a letter specifying his reasons for so sudden a departure. The situation she was then in is much easier to conceive than describe: but what made it still more deplorable was, the extreme cruelty of her father and friends, who still inhumanly insisted on her marrying Superbo, who was also so brutal as obtrude his solicitations with theirs. She was, however inflexible, and told them in plain terms, that since Philander was prevented from enjoying her, none else ever should. She moreover comforted herself, that so soon as an opportunity offered of writing to him, she would then clear up the whole affair, by letting him

know that every thing was carried on contrary to her inclination, and that he still, above every other person, was dear to her.

Soon after his arrival, the troops with which he came along joined the expedition of Gen Braddock against Fort du Quesne, an affair well known to many of your readers. Its melancholy event is also I dare say, recent in some of their memories. In this unfortunate action PHILANDER took the direction of the battalion in which he served, after its commanding officer was killed, and after having with it, perform'd deeds worthy of a second Leonidas, he shared the same fate with the general, such as did many other brave officers who also fell that day.— The effects of his valour so exasperated some of the Indians who served along with the French in that engagement that after having insulted his dead body they added that piece of cruelty peculiar to themselves, namely scalping His corpse was, however, afterwards discovered by an intimate companion of his at the general burying of the slain, by means of a miniature picture of Rosara set in gold, which he had always worn suspended by a ribband round his neck and which had accidentally escaped the vigilance of the savages. This, with some trifles, was returned to his friend.

The fate of the amiable Rosara in consequence of these melancholy news, is a

ſcene too big with horror to dwell upon. After the firſt tranſports of her grief which was exceſſive, were abated, her words became incoherent, her actions extravagant, and the whole of her deportment gave evident ſigns of inſanity. It was therefore thought neceſſary to watch her, in order to prevent her from committing any act of violence upon herſelf. Theſe precautions unluckily proved fruitleſs, as ſhe was one morning found ſtrangled in her bed — Thus fell two innocent and worthy perſons, victims to the inſatiable deſires of avarice, ſincerely lamented by all who had the happineſs of knowing them —From their unhappy fate take this advice:

10 JU 52

FINIS.